

# Mary Wigman: Exploring the Legacy of a Pioneering Dancer

In the realm of modern dance, one name stands out as a true pioneer and trailblazer – Mary Wigman. Her unique approach to movement and choreography revolutionized the art form, leaving an indelible mark on the world of dance. In this article, we delve into the life and contributions of Mary Wigman, exploring her influence on the field and her enduring legacy as one of the most important figures in dance history.

## The Early Years and Influences

Mary Wigman was born on November 13, 1886, in Hanover, Germany. Her early exposure to the performing arts, particularly through attending opera performances, ignited her passion for dance. However, it wasn't until she encountered the works of Rudolf Laban that her vision of movement truly began to take shape.

Under Laban's guidance, Wigman studied the principles of eurhythmics and the expressive possibilities of the human body. This education laid the foundation for her future explorations in dance and shaped her unique movement style. Additionally, Wigman was heavily influenced by the teachings of Émile Jaques-Dalcroze, another pioneer in the field of rhythmic gymnastics.

## Mary Wigman (Routledge Performance Practitioners)

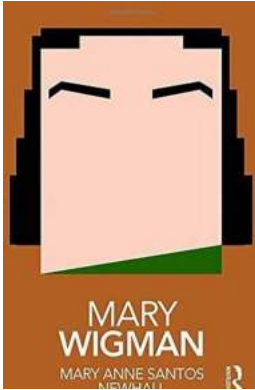
by Mary Anne Santos Newhall (1st Edition, Kindle Edition)

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## **The Birth of Expressionist Dance**

It was during the early 1920s that Wigman established herself as a leading figure in the development of Expressionist Dance, a groundbreaking movement in modern dance that aimed to convey emotions and inner experiences through movement.

Wigman's performances were characterized by her intense physicality and dynamic, gestural movements. She embraced the human body's ability to communicate emotions and tapped into the depths of human expression like never before seen in dance. Her choreographic works transcended the boundaries of traditional ballet, providing audiences with a deeply visceral experience.

Wigman's iconic solo piece, "Witch Dance," became a hallmark of Expressionist Dance. In this performance, she embodied the persona of a witch, using her body to express dark and mysterious emotions while challenging societal norms.

## **The Wigman School and Teaching Method**

Recognizing the need for a space to nurture and train upcoming dancers in her unique approach, Mary Wigman founded the Wigman School in Dresden in 1920. The school became a melting pot of creativity, attracting dancers and artists from across Germany and beyond.

At the Wigman School, Wigman developed a teaching method that focused on cultivating each student's individuality and inner expression. She encouraged her students to explore the depths of their emotions and connect with their bodies on a profound level. The result was a generation of dancers who pushed the boundaries of traditional dance forms and carried forward Wigman's vision.

## **Legacy and Impact**

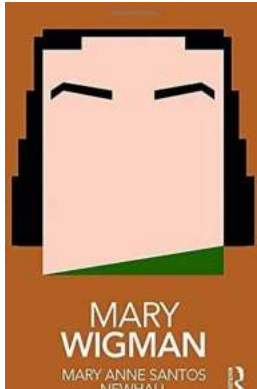
Mary Wigman's influence on the world of dance cannot be overstated. Her innovative choreography and fearless exploration of emotions paved the way for countless artists who came after her. Wigman's students went on to become influential figures in their own right, spreading her teachings across the globe.

Furthermore, Wigman's contributions to dance continue to be celebrated and studied today. Her techniques and philosophy are at the core of modern dance training, inspiring generations of dancers to connect with their bodies and unlock their artistic potential. Her pioneering work in Expressionist Dance has left an indelible mark on the art form, shaping its evolution and providing a foundation for future innovations.

## **In**

Mary Wigman's impact on modern dance cannot be overstated. Her groundbreaking approach to movement, combined with her fearless exploration of emotions, revolutionized the art form and continues to shape its evolution today. As a true pioneer and visionary, Wigman's legacy lives on through her

students, her choreographic works, and her lasting influence on dance education. The world of dance owes a debt of gratitude to Mary Wigman and her lasting contributions to the field.



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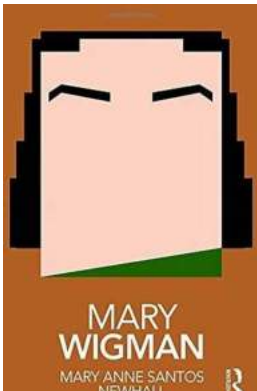


This book considers dancer, teacher, and choreographer Mary Wigman, a leading innovator in Expressionist dance whose radical explorations of movement and dance theory are credited with expanding the scope of dance as a theatrical art. Now reissued, this book combines:

- a full account of Wigman's life and work
- an analysis of her key ideas
- detailed discussion of her aesthetic theories, including the use of space as an "invisible partner" and the transcendent nature of performance

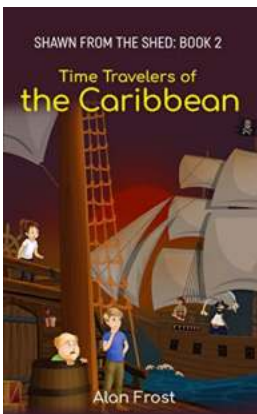
- a commentary on her key works, including Hexentanz and The Seven Dances of Life
- an extensive collection of practical exercises designed to provide an understanding of Wigman’s choreographic principles and her uniquely immersive approach to dance.

As a first step towards critical understanding, and as an initial exploration before going on to further, primary research, Routledge Performance Practitioners are unbeatable value for today’s student.



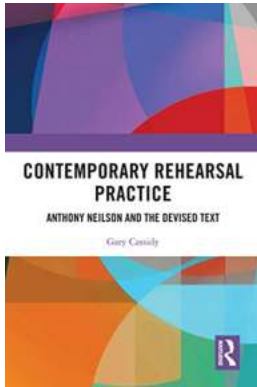
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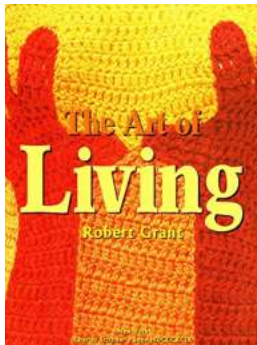
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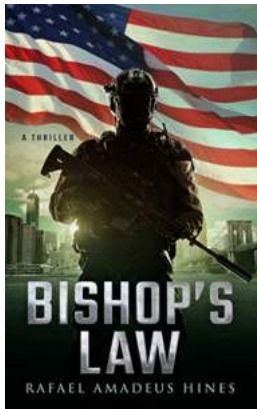
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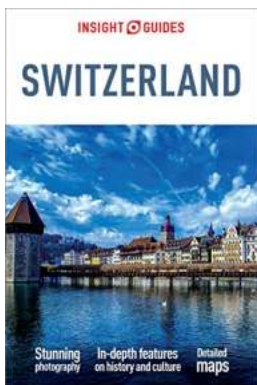
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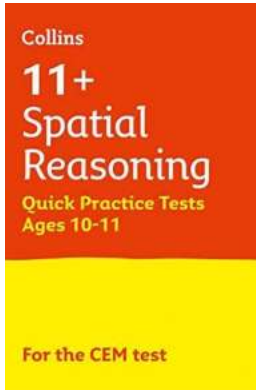
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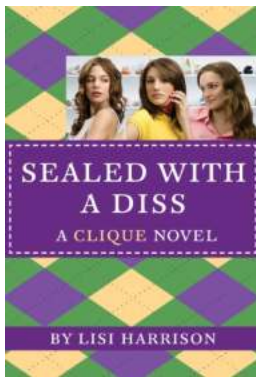
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